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In This Issue

The glare of publicity has been focussed on the public sector these last months. The judicial enquiry into the Life Insurance Corporation's investments in the Mundhra shares has cost the Finance Minister his office. If there is a further enquiry to get at all the facts, a few more important heads may roll in the dust. But we can hardly watch with equanimity such corruption in high places. The Life Insurance Corporation is an autonomous body but it has been managed just like one more department of Government. Fortunately for the country, our democratic instincts have asserted themselves just in time to prevent the spread of bureaucracy and demand the observance of ethical standards in the conduct of Government business. The same standards of honesty and fair dealing needs to be adopted by the private sector as well if the country is to grow prosperous.

Small Firms

In our desire for rapid industrialisation, one does get the impression that in the advanced industrial countries of

the world, there are exclusively mammoth concerns of very large size and a few scattered small scale firms. The article on *Small Factories* paints a very different picture of the existing size of business concerns in France which is one of the leading industrial nations of Europe. But while decentralisation of this type can be a boon to the country, it may go hand in hand with much exploitation of labour.

Community Projects

In similar vein to correct popular beliefs is the article on a particular Community Project in Bengal visited by the author. Not every single project has been a failure as we might be led to imagine after reading some of the evaluation reports about the projects. Some have succeeded and *Baruipur* is one of them. It is an excellent illustration of the kind of good work that is changing the face of rural India.

International Conferences

The dates and programmes of two international Conferences to be held in Brussels and Paris are important events to remember. Both relate to the social problem from different angles. One is concerned with fundamental values in the training of the social worker, and the other with the role by the mother in a changing world.

Managing Directors

Excerpts from the Pope's address to Managing Directors finds a place in this issue. As expected the Holy Father lays great stress on the Human factor in Industry.

The Editor

This Side and That

Family Planning

The persistence of campaigners for Family Planning through artificial birth-control compels one to reiterate past denunciations. Those protagonists do time after time boast of following Gandhian ideals ; yet they should be aware of Gandhiji's condemnation of their campaign. First of all, they back their propaganda with the plea of pushing ahead with intense and rapid industrialisation, a development Gandhiji never countenanced.

Even on purely economic grounds their movement may harm the country irreparably. Indeed, if they are keen on quickening national economy, let them pay heed to what was observed by A. Barrère, a professor of the Paris University : "Family malthusianism and economic malthusianism go in pairs, for both are born of a remiss choice of the least effort". Is there no secret parallelism between the mentality of parents who limit the number of their children, and the economic choice of secure investments instead of the normally productive investments which entail risks ? Is there no obvious connection between a family vitality which faces the future boldly and the spirit of initiative which marks out economic advance ? Are there no relations between a preponderance of self-seeking families and a national economy bent on mere self-defence against outside factors, between a lower man-power and an inert capital, between a weakening human potential and an economic process losing its dynamism ?

On the other hand, did not Gandhiji advert that artificial birth-control is a "practice that in India if it became general is bound to ruin the youth of the country" or that "great causes cannot be served by intellectual equipment alone ; they call for spiritual effort or soul-force". Indeed

Nuo-Malthusianism betrays a defeatist mentality which shrinks from the problems of a progressive economy, and rests satisfied with a comfortable mediocrity. Does not continence fit in admirably with a plan of austerity which is demanded by the second Five-Year Plan? As Gandhiji said, the future lies with the nations that are chaste.

Another Wrong Remedy

Besides the campaign to generalise what is nothing less than conjugal misconduct, one must point out to the growing laxity in public morals. Recent women's conferences loudly deplored this fall in public standards of moral conduct. They denounced the spread of prostitution and street-soliciting which is growing endemic in the larger cities. At times it is proposed to introduce what is called the regulation-system. This would be the wrong remedy. Any regulation-system of prostitution has three usual features: licensing of brothels, compulsory and regular examination of the inmates, compulsory detention at special hospitals for the diseased cases. Such vice-regulation is to be rejected on various grounds. First of all it goes against the dignity of woman and consequently against Common Law. It would mean that the State officially sets apart a section of the woman population to serve as mere instruments of pleasure to any man, that it officially dedicates human victims to commercialised vice, that it officially countenances what may be called a "debauched class", which would be on a par with officially organising "criminal classes", "gangs of robbers or murderers", etc. The regulation-system implies that the law takes away something of a woman's inalienable right over her own person, and also that the law admits that woman can be legally victimized by man's passion.

Hence the system goes against the equality of sexes and the fundamentals of our Constitution. The above was

the main argument of Mrs. Josephine Butler in her campaign in England some ninety years ago ; it led Gladstone to remark : " If Acts can be shown to be immoral in principles and tendency, no supposed physical advantages consequent on their operation can justify their continuance, and they must be repealed ". And so the Contagious Diseases Acts of 1864-69 were duly repealed.

A Delusion

It is often pleaded that a regulation-system prevents the spread of venereal diseases. This fact itself is seriously controverted and in many cases would not take away from the very legal discrimination mentioned above. Statistics of venereal diseases are hard to establish. At any rate, medical examination of brothel-inmates fails to eradicate the evil for many reasons ; it does not reach the clandestine cases which are more numerous than the cases in brothels ; it does not prevent " mediate " contagion ; it usually does not include the necessary blood test or microscopic test , it does not prevent cases arising immediately after examination etc. Moreover a measure which deals with the disease in one sex only is not only unscientific, but ridiculous if the disease is to be stamped out.

Against Public Morality

A vice-area is a temptation to light-headed young people who fancy there is no danger since the area is under official control ; it is an official and public invitation to unchastity which comes to be regarded as normal ; it implies an official tolerance of a regime of indefinite polyandry, etc. It is an official help in destroying conjugal love, since statistics record that the majority of brothel-customers are recruited not among the young bachelors but among unsatisfied husbands. Moreover a vice-area leads to foster opposition to social reforms by facilitating the grouping of all business thriving on the accessories of the vice-trade : food, liquor, showy clothing, rubber goods, etc.

On the other hand one should not admit the occasional plea that a regulation-system is a lesser evil, that sin with a vice-professional is less grievous than with others, etc. Such an argument is besides the point; the point of the abolitionists is that the legalised recognition of prostitution or the State-regulation of commercialised vice is an *evil in itself* and consequently cannot be justified as a possible means to even a good end. As Gandhiji so often repeated after all sound ethical authorities, both ends and means must be good. Moreover the plea is voided of all validity by the experience of several countries in which it was found that the regulation-system in practice led to greater moral and social evils than unrecognised vice.

A better remedy would be a thorough legislation thoroughly put into execution against all such public assaults on moral standards by both men and women, rich and poor. The ultimate reform of course is the Gandhian "heart conversion and self-control".

Drawbacks of Liberty

The Life Insurance Corporation "affair" revealed many of the possible drawbacks of a parliamentary democracy. In spite of our professions of non-violence, our financial fauna can witness occasional mutations of vegetarian animals into man-eaters. Freedom in economic life is not without disastrous wrongs which meet the description given by Pius XI. "The laws passed to promote corporate business while dividing and limiting the risks of business have given occasion to the most sordid license.... By hiding under the shelter of a joint name the worst of injustices and frauds are perpetrated....; directors of business companies forgetful of their trust betray the rights of those whose savings they have undertaken to administer; we must not omit to mention those crafty men who wholly unconcerned about any honest usefulness of their work do

not scruple to stimulate the baser human desires and when aroused to use them for their own profit."

"Not only is wealth concentrated in our times but an immense power and despotic dictatorship is consolidated in the hands of a few who often are not the owners but only the trustees and managing directors of invested funds which they administer according to their own arbitrary will and pleasure. This dictatorship is being most forcibly exercised by those who, since they hold the money and completely control it, control credit also and rule the lending of money. Hence they regulate the flow, so to speak, of the life-blood whereby the entire economic system lives, and have so firmly in their grasp the soul, as it were, of economic life that no one can breathe freely against their will".

Economic Bureaucracy

On the other hand nationalisation is no panacea against the evils of economic liberalism. Was not Karl Mark himself the most prone and violent denunciator of bureaucracy? Did he not write in his *Critique of Hegel's Philosophy*: "Bureaucracy takes hold of the State, the spiritual being of society; it is its *private* possession.... In a bureaucracy the identity of the State and of private individual interest is so close that the interest of the State becomes a private interest". As the caste of managers which boasts of the title "Organ of the Proletariat" is not made of New Men, concentration of political and of economic power in the same hands leads to the worst type of tyranny; tyranny can be fought against in democracies where political power is normally separated from economic power. Not so in totalitarian countries; there concentration of power is "incredible and portent-like in its inhumanity".

By comparison, a dictatorship over the proletariat knows far worse evil and tyranny than in parliamentary de-

mocracies. From totalitarian countries we hear little of the scandals which sadden democracies so deeply, though we hear far retain cries from concentration camps. In totalitarian lands purges take place behind an Iron Curtain; in democracies all troubles happen behind lace curtains.

We prefer lace curtains; they are symbolical of family-life.

Wisdom of Littleness

But true to the family-spirit, we should remember the wisdom of equality which Peter Maurin teaches us in one of his *Easy Essays* :

When the big shots
become bigger shots
then the little shots
become littler shots.

And when the little shots
become littler shots
because the big shots
become bigger shots,
then the little shots
get mad at the big shots.

And when the little shots
get mad at the big shots,
because the big shots
by becoming bigger shots
make the little shots
littler shots,
they shoot the big shots
full of little shots.

But by shooting the big shots
full of little shots
the little shots
do not become big shots,
They make everything
all shot.

A. L.

Baruipur Re-visited

It was early in November, 1952, barely a month after the inauguration of the Community development Project Plan on a nation-wide basis. And the newly constituted Community Development Block of Baruipur of fifty seven square miles and a population of nearly 83,000 souls in about 18,000 presented a picture which would seem to defy the most adventurous spirit in the field of rural uplift. It was not that the local people and village folk were unsympathetic towards those who had come to help them improve the Block. But what improvement could be possible when a third of the area was water logged due to the silting of the river Piali? With their fields under water for a period of ten to twelve years, with their miserable huts water-logged and the inability to find any kind of useful occupation, who could blame the folk of Baruipur if they lacked all enthusiasm for any kind of uplift? To people who live "off the land", the failure of the land to support them often spells a tragedy too deep for human understanding! Strangely enough, while in other parts of the country tracts of land lay barren and bare due to a drought, here many acres of good fertile land produced nothing because it lay, for many years, under water! Obviously, in 1952, the need of the Baruipur Development Block was land reclamation. This was necessary not only to win back the land for cultivation, but, perhaps, still more important, to win over the people, for the psychological effect wrought by such a transformation of the land, would be of immense help to the further progress of the development of the Block.

This was done, and five years later, it was a pleasure to visit the Block. Where once acres of good land stood submerged in water, now vast fields of healthy crops met the eye. Where once the village huts stood in knee-deep

water, requiring the need of rafts and small boats to enable the villager to reach his home, now, the "new look" in the village was made clear by the appearance of a kitchen garden cultivated around the huts, and newly made pathways and lanes giving access to the cluster of village huts.

It would be wrong, however, to believe that the whole effort of the Community Development Project was centred only upon the water-logged areas of the Baruipur Block. While the physical betterment of the rest of the Block is certainly not as spectacular as that which meets the eye in areas recovered from the evils of silting, the improvement cannot be gainsaid. The main emphasis has, naturally, been on improving the agricultural methods and yields of the Block. This has been carried out on both the intensive and extensive scale, by the careful use of better seeds, different kinds of fertilisers and manure from town compost pits. One interesting feature in this battle for better crops, has been the use of the local water-hyacinth, which plant as all visitors to Bengal know covers almost every pool and tank in the State. Water-hyacinth compost together with village compost have afforded rich manure for the improvement of cultivation in the Block. In this way, the water-hyacinth which is usually considered the pest of Bengal has been turned to good use! The life of a farmer is something more than the mere tilling and ploughing of the soil; in fact, the whole life and pattern of life of the cultivator is bound up with his work in the fields. Hence, it is not surprising that new methods of cultivation and improved agricultural aids do not easily meet with a welcome from the former. However, thanks to the persistent efforts of the officials of the Baruipur Development Block, the introduction of new crops, crop rotation and soil conservation have now become a feature of the agricultural effort of the people. It is not uncommon to find in most fields demonstration plots where the farmer is able to witness the

utility and productiveness of the new agricultural methods. This has become so popular among the people that five years after its establishment, the Block counts nearly three thousand half-plot demonstration areas.

It is a well known fact, that the food production in this country suffers from a great amount of "leakage"; the leakage consequent upon allowing fertile land to go waste; the loss of crops due to insects, bad harvesting and storage. These problems of food production have not been neglected in the Block, and besides the land reclaimed from the water-logged areas, the people themselves have extended their cultivable fields to the extent of over three thousand acres. This alone is some indication of the fact, that whatever lack of co-operation has been experienced in other Development Blocks in Baruipur, the local inhabitants have certainly not been lacking in entering into the spirit of the development project. They have certainly put in their share of the work, and the increased productive value of the soil stands as witness to the success of their work! They have learnt the use of insecticides, and know that when the new crop is given ample protection the harvest may fulfil their expectations.

In a small way, Baruipur has long been known as the "fruit garden" of Bengal. This has been a definite asset in the development of the area, and the proximity of the Block to the great metropolitan city of Calcutta helps easy sale in a good and big market. This type of horticulture received new impetus with the establishment of the development project, and the local people took full advantage of the many facilities afforded by the Block organisation. New types of fruits have been introduced, grafts, seedlings and saplings have been distributed and planted over wide areas.

In order to facilitate transport to the market, the inhabitants of the Block have given their own labour for the

construction of suitable roads, and have been keen to link up almost every section of the Block with the main arteries of communication. This free labour given by the local people for the construction of public roads and lanes may be better appreciated when it is remembered that for these agricultural people every hour taken from work on their own fields and farms means so much more personal labour to be made up on some other day. Hence while it remains true that much is still to be done in our Community Development Blocks, there is, without doubt, a "community feeling or sentiment" which is slowly, and sometimes painfully, growing among the peoples of these Blocks.

The Co-operative ideal is not new in India. In fact, the effort of the Government to spread the working of co-operative societies has been well known in this country, and one of the aims of the Community Development Projects is to make the co-operative ideal a reality in every development Block. Following this practice a number of co-operative societies have been established in the Barupur Block. The main type, as elsewhere in the country are credit co-operative societies, for the rural population in this Block as in most rural areas suffer from an everlasting shortage of money! Unfortunately, in this field of the supply of credit, competition is as ruthless as that of *Laissez faire* economics! Besides, the facilities provided by the Government for the supply of credit, there are the ever obliging services of the agriculturist money-lender and the professional money-lender to tempt the needy rural population of the country.

So intense is the competition offered by these types of money-lenders that The Survey Report of the Committee of Direction of the All India Rural Credit Society, says: "The role played by Government and the co-operatives in rural finance was, on the average, negligible. The bulk of

the credit was supplied by the money-lenders — professional and agriculturist — and as much as 70 per cent of the rural debt owed to them. The agriculturist money-lender as a credit agency was second in importance to his professional counter-part". According to the Survey Report of the total amount borrowed by cultivators, only 3.3 per cent was from Government, 3.1 per cent from co-operatives and 0.9 per cent from commercial banks.

In the sphere of Public Health, the achievements of the Community Development Programme in Baruiipur have not been meager. Without trying to burden the reader with statistics concerning the number of tube-wells, "dug-well latrines", soakage pits, and smokeless ovens constructed, it must be remembered that the willing use of even one of these equipment by the local inhabitants entails often long months and even years of persistent effort on the part of the development personnel! In fact, unless one has been in the field of rural welfare and social uplift, it is not easy to conceive the colossal effort demanded from the village folk, who for generations have been used to one way of life, to change to, say, a smokeless oven, from one which fills the hut with smoke and soot! This change needs much more of an effort when it touches the sphere of public health, because in this case, intimate beliefs customs, modes of conduct and behaviour are involved. Hence, it is not easy to get our local village population to make a quick change and accept all the latest findings of modern medicine and dietary programmes. And, therefore, when we find that in the Baruiipur Development Block, a large section of the people have taken to the use of tubewells, cheap sanitary latrines, smokeless ovens; when we see that they have learnt the value of anti-malaria control, and, most of all, an improved dietary programme, then it must be admitted that the measure of success secured in this field is certainly not small!

The kind of obstacle the rural social welfare worker encounters is well illustrated by this true incident which took place in a Development Block, not that of Baruipur. The fatal Rani-Khat epidemic broke out in the area and was taking a heavy toll of the fowl population. The Gram Sevak, or Village Level Worker in the Block, was instructed to try and get the people to have their poultry inoculated, and a day and time was appointed, at each village, when he would attend to the birds. When the appointed day arrived, no one turned up, except the Vice-President of the local Rural Development Committee bringing his few birds! Nothing daunted, the Gram Sevak called on his village friends, and after talking all round the point he was, at last, politely told: "You know we cannot go against God! It is due to our sins that God has sent this disease to take away the lives of our fowls!" There was little the Gram Sevak could do. Soon the whole fowl population of the villages in the area was wiped out, except for the few birds of the lucky Vice-President who had had his birds inoculated. However, the effort of the Gram Sevak was not in vain, for seeing the survival of the Vice-President's birds, the following year, many a village poultry-farmer brought his birds for inoculation!

The pity of it is that those who too hastily criticise the slow progress of rural rehabilitation appear to forget the simple saying, that you can build a Hydro-electric dam in five years but you cannot change the way of life of peoples' within that time. The former is made up iron, steel and bricks, while the latter is founded on the very human problems of culture, habits, and social attitudes. To be sure, education can do it, rather do something, and the many secondary schools and social education centres in the Baruipur Block are slowly wearing down age-old prejudices and superstitions. Here again, it has often been found that not uncommonly education often tends to remain purely aca-

démic. That is to say, while one may know and have read all about health and cleanliness, the practice that should follow such knowledge is woefully lacking! To be sure, all is not perfect in the Baruipur Development Block, but to anyone who visited the area in 1952 and then five years later, there is not doubt that much progress had been made, even if it has been slow!

C. C. Clump

Small Factories

In the "Revue de l'Action Populaire", Mlle M. Aumont, the tireless student of the labour world in France, brings out the sociological problems peculiar to small factories, and notes many points which may prove instructive to our social workers and reformers.

Material Conditions

The concerns which employ less than fifty workmen make up to ninety per cent of the French industries, in spite of all the talk about big combines and nationalisation.⁽¹⁾ They are of three main types: some copy the style of modern factories and draft in skilled labour but recruit rather from among the unskilled, particularly youths and women; others have remained in the artisan tradition (professionals, high salaries and finished products). A few are of a rather mixed type: subsidiaries of larger concerns for test and research work. Often enough small factories do not comply with all the regulations of the Labour Code. Were Labour Inspectors to be sticklish, some three fourths of those factories would be choked out of existence by the

⁽¹⁾ In the U.S.A. the number of small concerns was about 95 per cent of the total business population in early 1956; they provided employment to more than 25 million people and accounted for about a third of the national output of goods and services. (The Eastern Economist, 15-2-57).

letter of the law. In the metallurgical line especially the working place is poorly lit and badly ventilated, the machinery old and unprotected, the cloakroom dismal, the toilet service miserable and the canteen inexistent. In winter the stoves are looked after by the workmen themselves and that is so much leisurely overtime.

Wages are somewhat low, the minimum or nearly so ; no paid holiday, no yearly bonus ; nobody to take up the case of the ill-favoured. In most cases life is as dreary as in a large combine. On the other hand, the enterprises which are run rather on the 'artisan basis' though they offer no better standard as regards material conditions of work show a better atmosphere ; the workmen feel like partners and comrades ; they are not quite wage-earners and they divide the profits. Of course any depression is much harder, and failure or bankruptcy fatal. The solidarity is fair enough and as the professional work is more satisfying, life is not unpleasant.

Human Relationship

The most obvious deficiency in small factories regards material conditions : wages, hygiene, security. The main problem, however, regards man and mind ; this holds good even in economically sound conditions. In some cases, there is no trade-union life or little of it in spite of low wages, long working hours and an exhausting tempo ; the workmen seem to be de-humanized by labour itself. Elsewhere a dull life born from long experience and commonsense is accepted by employers and employees as a satisfactory basis ; no questions are asked, no claim advanced, no class-struggle suggested ; resignation or stupor is endemic and forestalls any trade-union interference.

Is the small enterprise so self-sufficient that it debars any outside influence ? Are its workmen cut off from the national workers movement ? Or, on the contrary, is the

very recruitment an explanation of this aloofness? Have the recruits such special temperament, tastes and needs that they are best adapted to small-size undertakings? Is there a peculiar sector of the labouring classes solely adapted to them?

The Workers' Movement

Many small factories have no delegates and no representatives with trade-unions. In theory trade-unions should cover all factory, however small; they possess maps on which every concern is located. Since ninety per cent of the factories in France have less than fifty workmen and since one half of the labour force is employed in concerns of less than one hundred workmen, these should call for a special attention from trade-unions. The organising of the movement should consist in rallying and animating this numberless group in small factories, and making sure there is a trade-union group in each of them. But this looks like a Trojan task. The local organisers have no time, and no taste for contacting scattered workmen; however much they may see the need of distributing notices, pamphlets and fly-sheets, they feel shy of so enormous a task that should be carried out regularly. They are engrossed in their hurried work, and when in a hurry what to do except be satisfied with contacting the very large groups, which are themselves graduated: factories which are keen on trade-unionism and responsive to any appeal, those which are tepid, those in which one or other local militant does his best, and finally the small concerns which occupy the thought of the organisers but no their time? On occasion an incident or other forces the small concern to approach a trade-union, but the rapprochement vanishes with the occasion.

In general, the small concern keeps away from the workers struggle, and betrays an attitude of dull resignation and duller apathy. Mlle Aumont instances a factory of

loud speakers staffed with some sixty women, working forty hours a week, receiving low wages, and hustled into an unnerving tempo. Clearly those women entertain no hope; the intervention of trade-unionism would be indicated. Twice trade-unionists came in, talks were held, optimism ran high. All were ready to join and to fight. But soon the management had the most fervent enthusiast dismissed and the factory went back to its resigned pessimism. The influence of the manager had a strong hold on the workers: all came from the immediate neighbourhood, they can go home at noon, pick the children at the school near by and do their shopping on the way. They are tied to the factory and to the neighbourhood.

On the other hand, even if the situation is less harsh, the militant soon loses heart in a concern where he is left isolated when a small group of his kind would be necessary; alone, he can do nothing and after a few weeks of useless effort he gives up. The factory gets a bad name among trade-unionists and that's about all. The militant may have been clumsy in his approach or unable to discover the key-spring that would have set the movement in motion. There are factories which seem impervious to trade-unionism.

Closed Concerns

The explanation is that small concerns have a spirit of their own; "With us it is not the same", the workmen will tell you, "With us there is something particular"; the worker will say that the situation is more complicated, the employer that it is "less deteriorated". The small concern may have grown in the shade of large undertakings; it has remained aloof from the general movement, or rather it has developed according to its peculiar needs and possibilities. Its very spirit shocks and rebuffs the professional trade-unionist. Yet once he has made up his mind to drop

his a priori views and to study the case in its peculiarities, he will dig out the conviction that the same aspiration, the same thirst for liberation lies deep in the heart of the labour of small concerns as well as in the gigantic undertakings.

The smaller the group of workmen, the greater the relative importance of each one and the tighter the links between them all. The task of each one is and appears in an obviously personal character ; it is the task of Joe or John, not the task of an anonymous fellow-worker ; it is a task that is seen to impinge on the task of the neighbour. It is not a whistle that marks the time, but the voice of a living time-keeper. It is not a department that takes over the ill-finished product, it is the foreman himself that does the repair or even the boss himself. The produce is assembled, packed and despatched under the eyes of all. Waste and defect are known from all, the bonus cut down for all ; bad work repels customers in the hearing of all. All kinds of links and ties bind all in the same work and the same interests. On the other hand supervision is also more personal, closer, and even more responsive to the good or bad temper of the day ; all is far from being perfect in the small factory, but all that happens has a human touch, all gives the sense of a community of work. Even the boss becomes a living human being. He is seen everyday, at work on a lathe, calling for help from time to time, helping any workman who feels at a loss before a machine out of order and taking in all possible suggestions. Each workman knows the boss, his temper, even his brand of cigarettes, his voice, even the events in his family ; he is a man who says good morning and good evening to everybody, who allows discussions. He is above the men, yet among the men. He is not the distant anonymous boss of the large factory.

Employer and Employees

Even were the trade-union staffed well enough to depute militants to the small factories, they would find it hard to rally them. The small concern is a sociological reality of its own. It is not exactly a "capitalist undertaking" with the classical class struggle, in spite of the injustices and exploitation which are real and frequent. In most of them, boss and workmen will say: "With us it is not the same".

The most likely explanation is that the small concern is a — political. Conditions are closer to the natural level, nearer the normal situation. By the very fact of the small size of the factory, relations between boss and workers possess what might be called a "communitarian trend". In a large factory the worker who joins gets into a bloc, and that bloc is opposed to the other bloc. In a small concern he joins as one of the whole group, a group in which the boss is one member though the most important member. He is initiated into what should normally be a working community.

In fact this community is not always a reality. Does the worker take the factory as being his own? Does he share in its management, in its development, in its decisions, in its fortune? Alas! no; too often the workman's life is depressed, helpless, discouraged. The factory is not what it should be, what it might be; it is a lie. Yet little would be needed to transform it, a toning up of human relations, a crystallizing element in the social atmosphere, a dose of vitamins that would activate the possibilities into the realities of a genuine community. The people engaged in small concerns keep it as it is, apparently because they have some vague hope that one day the change will occur.

The workmen in a small concern, with their peculiar mentality, and their social characteristics, embody a type

of workmen ; they have a personality and a value of social importance. They are *themselves*, fully but solely. They surprise trade-unionists ; they are on the margin of the movement ; peculiar are their views, peculiar their world (family, fellow-workmen, living quarters), peculiar their style of life (simple, serviceable, loveable and loving). They are apart from the proletarian movement, dream of no social victory, are uninterested in social struggle and politics. They are absent from society at large. Yet they are precious.

They are precious because they represent an ideal, distant possibly but inspiring. They resist the anonymity of large-scale industrialism, and thus show they are alive. They are modest embodiments of the communitarian trend, the constructive bend, the craving for a personalist and social type of industry.

Therein lies the message and mission of the small business. Therein lies its responsibility. Were employers and employees of small business realise their responsibility to society at large, and, thanks to a non-violent moral revolution, improve its material conditions and tone up its moral atmosphere, it would do much to inspire in the industrial world a sense of harmony, cooperation and human relationship which legislation will never be able to achieve. The small concern holds great hopes to our social future.

Similar considerations of human welfare were underlined in many of the speeches recently addressed to the Congress Session at Gauhati or to the Bharat Sevak Samaj. Rourkela with its outlay of Rs. 170 crores would employ at most some twenty thousand persons, and along with the largest undertakings sponsored by the Government would do little to reduce unemployment and underemployment for our vast population. The solution was to

be found in the villages themselves where millions and millions had to reach full employment; the bulk of the production in goods and commodities had to come from village industries, cottages or small factories in the private sector. Compared with the ten lakh tons of paper produced in India, does not Japan reach a production of 28 million tons? And does not most of that output come from small units?

What is needed is the will to work, and to work hard, as Mr. M. M. Shah said in his address to the Bharat Sevak Samaj. America had immense natural resources, he said, but those resources had to be worked out, and utilized by the unflagging energy of immigrants who toil in the mines, the ranches and the farms. Let our social volunteers go to the American countryside and they will find out what had made the country prosperous, and how the per capita income had risen to the fantastic level of Rs. 8,000.

The human element is decisive in solving the economic problem, and our social volunteers should stand as model workers and instil their will to work among the masses lying in pathetic poverty throughout the villages.

A.ALLEMAND

Documentation

THE HUMAN FACTOR IN INDUSTRY

(On March 7th, 1957, the Holy Father addressed members of the Italian Christian Congress of Managing Directors on the occasion of their Conference. He spoke on the industrial and social changes which are destined to follow in the wake of automation on the human factor in the new industrial conditions, and the industrialisation of Italy.)

The Human Factor in Industry

You all know that the human personality of the worker in the higher and lower ranks of industry, whenever there is an effort to increase productivity, is even in our times, recognised as decisive. But unfortunately this is very often overlooked.

Unless a remedy for this state of affairs can be found, such negligence would not only retard the development of automation, but would cause an unforeseen crisis in the world of labour and finally lead to serious damage of the whole national economy.

Training for Automation

In order to avoid this triple disaster, it is incumbent upon leaders in the world of industry to act without delay. They should give serious attention to the training of those engaged in production in a more vigorous manner than they have in the past. Although the transition from an economy of handicraft production to one of mechanized production appeared at first to reduce the worker to the status of a mere spectator, it soon became evident that there was a growing need of well trained and qualified technicians and higher operatives. Much more than will this demand increase with the advance of automation, not

only during the period of transition but also after it is over, and the new equipment will require to be maintained and operated. Indeed, the age of automation will emphasise the pre-eminence of the intellectual qualities of the workers — their scientific knowledge, their spirit of invention, their organisational ability and foresight.

There is no doubt that during this period of transition unemployment will increase among older workers since they are less able to pick up new ways of work. The problem of unemployment will be made more acute because the rivalry among the nations will quicken the march towards automation. Hence the necessity of foreseeing even at this moment, suitable measures to prevent the dynamic advance of technology from becoming a public tragedy. At all events it is incumbent upon entrepreneurs to accept the principle that technology must be the servant of the economy and not the reverse.

State Intervention in Economic Life

While making clear to all peoples their proper share even though small in the task of building the economic society of the future, We are far from admitting that such a task should be confided to the State as its ordinary field of action. Nevertheless, while watching the trend of even Catholic Congresses on economic and social questions, one often notices an increasing appeal to State intervention, so much so that sometimes the impression is created that that is the only possible expedient. No doubt according to Catholic social doctrine the State has its rightful role in the social life of the country. In order to fulfil this role the State should enjoy sufficient power and authority. But those who continue to appeal to the State and throw upon it all responsibility will bring it to ruin and make it the plaything of certain powerful and interested groups. The result is that all personal responsibility in public affairs

disappears, and then when people speak of the duties and the shortcomings of the State, they understand thereby the obligations and failures of anonymous groups, among whom they do not count themselves.

On the contrary, every citizen should be conscious of the fact that the State whose intervention he seeks is always in reality and in the final analysis, the collective unity of the citizens themselves. Hence, it follows that none of us may ask the State to fulfil its obligations and undertake certain tasks, when we ourselves are unwilling to make our own contribution, if only by way of a conscientious use of the rights granted us by law.

Personal Responsibility the key to Social Reform

In truth, economic advance and social reform do not depend, except in an indirect way, upon the efficient operation of this or that institution, especially when these are not opposed to the natural law. They depend necessarily however and intimately on the personal value of the human being, on his moral force and willingness to shoulder responsibility and on his ability to understand and deal with in a cultured and competent manner the things he undertakes or which he is obliged to accomplish. No recourse to the State can create men of this calibre. Indeed such men must come from the ranks of the people in such a manner that the electoral pool into which flows at the same time elements of irresponsibility, inability and passion may be hindered from passing a death sentence on the true and authentic character of the State.

The Personal Factor

But why, leaders of industry, do we address you thus? Because We are convinced that your very position in life brings continually before your view the fact that what counts most is the person of the human being. No economic

plan, no professional or legislative institution, no organisation with its operatives and unions is able to create or replace the personal worth of the human being. Make this value of the human person widely known because there is a strong prejudice that the State should do all everything and that institutions are all powerful. But you must publicise this fact of the personal value and worth of the individual worker ; this will truly be a healthy policy for all industrialists. The soundness of family life, thorough knowledge and scholarly education, an advance in the culture of the people — all this should form part of your policy Do everything therefore so that the conscientious, cultured and experienced worker may always find a place in society and in the economy, so that he may raise himself to a higher and nobler plane by his labour.

C. C. C.

Social Trends Abroad

International Congresses

The Catholic International Union of Social Service is holding its 9th World Congress in Brussels, Belgium, from August 18th to the 25th, 1958. The theme of the Congress will be : "Towards a more human world : the contribution of social service". The Congress will take place during the World Exhibition at Brussels.

The major conferences will deal with fundamental subjects like The Fundamental Christian Values and Social Service ; Social Work of Today and Liberty ; Conditions of life and human relationships ; Modern Social Techniques and Fundamental Values ; World Social Progress and United Nations ; Social Service and rapidly developing countries. The last contribution in this list will be given by Dr. W. Adiseshiah of India.

Besides the main conferences, there will be the Commissions to deal with more practical matters in the light of the facts submitted by the representatives of various countries. Four commissions will discuss the following questions :

- (1) How can Schools in Social Work train social workers in the fundamental Christian values ?
- (2) How can the Associations of Social Workers maintain and develop the fundamental christian values in exercising their profession ?
- (3) Our collaboration with the social programme of the United Nations.
- (4) Social Service and missionary work in countries undergoing rapid development.

Since quite a large number of delegates are expected, they will be given an opportunity to discuss concrete subjects concerning social service in Study Groups. The subjects will be

1. Study of the function of the social worker
2. New tendencies in industrial social services and human relationships.
3. Necessity for trained social administrators in public and private institutions.
4. Present state of the teaching of psychology in the Schools of Social Service.
5. Present state of the teaching of sociology in the Schools of Social Service.
6. Case-work and the Christian conception of man.
7. Social Group Work.
8. Community Social Work.
9. Practical training and the place of supervision in social service.

In brief the Congress aims at studying the fundamental values essential to all human and Christian life, and will examine how best to integrate these values in the training and professional life of Catholic social workers throughout the world. Other important topics will be co-operation on a world level among Catholic social workers, common planning, and the realisation of these plans through the United Nations in the social field, and finally the urgent problems facing countries in the throes of rapid expansion.

World Movement of Mothers

The World Movement of Mothers that has consultative status with the U.N.O., the UNESCO and the UNICET, will be holding its international research session in Paris from the 9th to the 15th June, 1958. The theme of this session will be "In this fast moving world, Mother, where are you bound?" The Conference will deal with the interrelation, on a world-wide scale, between the recent scientific, economic and social evolution, and the life of a mother and her role in the family and in society.

Some of the main questions for discussion will be maternity, the family and family activities, professional careers for women, mothers and education.

Crisis in the U. S. Labour Movement

In his address to the 16th Constitutional Convention of the United Automobile, Aircraft and Agricultural Implementation Workers, Mgr. George Higgins laid the blame for the many recently publicised short-comings of the American Labour Movement on the double standard of morality adopted by American trade unionists. Quoting from the work of a distinguished Jewish philosopher and labour economist, Mr. Will Herberg, he said that "the lack of a labour conscience is, in a sense, the basic problem of American trade unionism, and is closely linked with its lack of

philosophy or long-range perspective. It is a problem that has its historical, sociological, and theoretical aspects. The phenomenon of a 'double morality' obtains, one ethic for private life and another for the organisation involved.

But what I want to stress here is how little religion has been operative in the lives of leaders and rank and file workers alike in their capacity as members of the labour movement. Among Catholics there has been almost total divorce between their religion and their labour activity. As for Jews and Protestants, their outlook on social questions and the relevance of their religion, if they have any, to their labour concerns never so much as enters their minds."

Mgr. Higgins however does not agree entirely with Herberg. He is convinced that the American labour movement is basically sound from the point of view of Christian social ethics, and has had a tremendous influence for good within the American Community. All the same, the labour movement is facing a crisis which is basically moral and spiritual. And one which has its roots within the movement itself. Labour's real enemies are its dues-paying members and its elected officers.

Labour should not be too discouraged by the revelation of the rot within its ranks, for this only proved that no particular class of people in society had a monopoly of virtue. In the long run the present discomforture would be for the good of the Labour Movement.

Mgr. Higgins ascribes the lack of interest on the part of rank and file in union affairs and an unwillingness to relate morality to the everyday problems of the labour movement to a decline in moral and spiritual values. Rank and file must be convinced that they have a moral obli-

gation to assume their full share of responsibility for the conduct of union affairs. Such a sacred sense of their duties towards the union can only be created by religion.

It is true, he went on, that it is part of the American tradition that every convention should be opened with a prayer. But he advised the American workers not to be satisfied with these outward formalities and ceremonial bows to religion. It was necessary to deepen religious convictions and to narrow the gap between religion and labour. This was actually being achieved by the new regulations regarding union funds, weeding out the Communists, promoting community welfare and international justice.

Yet quite a number of defects were being high-lighted of late. There was racketeering, racial discrimination, jurisdictional squabbling among the unions, not to speak of the misuse of funds and pressure tactics by union leaders. But there was one other defect — the sensitiveness of labour to legitimate criticism of its own economic, social and political policies and the tendency to exaggerate the merits of its own case and to magnify the faults of the opposition. But the workers should realise that both they and their critics were living in glass houses and should therefore stop throwing stones at each other out of a partisan and propaganda spirit.

Finally in cleaning up the movement of racketeers, Mgr. Higgins advised the trade unions not to sit in judgement over the defaulters or to bitterly criticise the unions involved, for this might lead to disunity. Rather they should sit together like a family and try to help each other to solve a common problem.

The Philosophy of Social Service

The January, 1958 issue of *Service Social dans le Monde* contains an interesting article on the Philosophy of Social Service from the pen of the distinguished M. l'Abbe Picher, who is the director of the Social Secretariat of CELAM, a social organisation of Colombia, South America. He writes, "By its very nature, which aims at the full development of the human personality, Social Service implies the existence of a philosophy. How is this so? We can accept this conclusion more easily if we study the underlying principles by which social service is inspired in the various ways and methods it uses to fulfil its purpose.

Social Service is a true service rendered to the human being, not mere subservience of either the client to the professional agent, or of the agent to the client. It is a work of co-operation between the two subjects. The philosophy of social service is built on the dynamism of human relationships that gradually results from several contacts. Man cannot live alone. His contact with the objective world gives him not only the anti-thesis of his being, (as far as he is human), but also contact with his fellowmen makes known to him his intimate self.

Giorgio del Vecchio, the well-known jurist, underlines the subjective quality of all man's relationships. Pope Pius XII declares: "Never can man become the object, the passive element of social life, but he must be and remain its centre, its agent, its aim and subject."

On the other hand, a sociological materialist concept of society such as that of Comte, maintains society at the material level, that of bare facts, and a determined

mechanism, without describing life, its relations or the essence of being. The idea of society rather implies relation, communication, subjective exchanges among beings, the existence of an affective and spiritual life, and finally of mutual enrichment by these exchanges.

Every human experience is bound and attached to other experiences which make up the warp and weft of history. From this it follows that social service cannot be reduced to a method, it must be lived.

There exists in man something which cannot be defined or explained but only apprehended. Gabriel Marcel tells us that every thought that comes to the mind conveys at the same time this peculiar presence of a subject, something that cannot be defined but only perceived. And Buber adds that the life of human beings is not confined to activities conveying knowledge of objects alone. When we say 'You', the person saying the word does not merely know an object, but finds himself in reciprocal relationship with a person. Matter does not involve this reciprocity, nor this character of the absolute, original, and untransmittable element peculiar to the immaterial spirit.

Social service is based on the existence of human rights. It stems from the relationship between rights and duty. These rights and duties are not merely subjectively imagined, but are based on human individual conscience. There is in man innate impulses towards the desire and observance of justice and truth, which arise specifically in the relationships between one man and another. Since all men have the same natural tendencies towards such an ordering of the relationships among them, it follows that all men have equal rights and duties, and each man can expect to be

given his rights by others and to observe his duties towards others. Social service is ultimately based on the existence of such rights and duties.

Men are not alone in the world, but live in time and against a background of human history, and have the duty of developing themselves into truly human beings. In the process, man at first receives from society till he reaches a certain maturity when he in turn can make his contribution to society. Thus when he puts in his claim for social service, man is only making use of his social and civic rights in asking society to help him to develop his latent faculties and to practise the virtues proper to the person.

Thus in exercising its functions, social service penetrates the depths of the subjective life of the client and satisfies his sense of natural justice, while awakening the hidden resources of his being. Thus civic rights are essentially human. They derive from the ethical sentiment in man. They go beyond the temporal and material finalities of the individual and reach out to the unlimited perspectives of the human personality that is essentially spiritual.

Society is the result of the rationality in men. The mechanisms of conscience are set in motion by the inter-relationship of man with man in a community. Social contacts are thus psychologically necessary in the formation of personality. They form part of the personal history of each man and mould and orient his career. The human being is a being that is evolving. Placing emphasis on this idea, social service attempts to draw on the illimitable resources of this being. It does not consider the client as the object but as the subject of a relationship, and will never tend to

absorb it within the collective life of the group. It preserves the individual by focussing attention on each individual in particular, and adapting its service to each particular personality; hence its service to each can never be the same.

In sizing up the human person, social service bypasses its stage of maturity — it concentrates on the innate capacity of the individual, for man is not to be measured against a temporal material end, but against a spiritual eternal destiny. Unfortunately public authorities fail to appreciate this fact. They have no philosophical foundation for public welfare. But social service should draw its strength from truth which makes possible a communion of spirits. Its principles are identified with those of the ideal society where being meets first of all with love.

BOOK REVIEWS

LABOUR PROBLEMS IN INDIAN INDUSTRY, by V. V. Giri published by the Asia Publishing House. pp. 444, price Rs. 18-00.

As Mr. David Morse in his Preface to this book writes, Mr. Giri combines "the roles of a trade union leader in his country, its Central (or Federal) Minister of Labour and an historian," in this book "He has taken time to fulfil the other role, that of an historian". *Labour Problems in Indian Industry*, is, in fact, the work of an historian, and some of the best sections of the book are those which treat of the historic growth of the many problems in the field of industrial labour.

In sixteen chapters Mr. Giri covers the most important aspects of all Labour Problems in India, from the growth of the Trade Union Movement to such other problems which concern Industrial Relations, Labour Legislation, Rationalisation, Wages, Social security and agricultural labour. Incidentally he throws light on the much debated origin of the Indian National Trade Union Congress, when he writes: "Since their (the Congress Leaders) attempts to change the policy of the All India Trade Union Congress proved futile, the labour leaders of the Congress Party felt the necessity to form a new trade union organisation" (p. 26). How far the true interests of the workers are still submerged by political considerations of the party to which unions are affiliated may be judged by the fact that, "It is complained that if a dispute is raised by a union of a particular group, the government makes a reference, but if a similar dispute is raised by another union in a different camp reference is not made or is delayed for a considerable period" (p. 73).

In view of the rapid industrialization of the country, perhaps, the chapters on Industrial Relations and Man-Power Planning are of special interest. Unfortunately, Mr. Giri despite his vast experience in the labour field, in these chapters, leaves the reader with the feeling that he has nothing to contribute towards the establishment of industrial peace. To say that "the success of collective bargaining depends on the ability to achieve mutual consent" appears to beg the whole question! Surely Mr. Giri must know that the whole tempo of labour in India today, due to so many human factors, needs careful training before even the pre-requisite of such an agreement can be secured? As to Man-Power Planning it seems to escape Mr. Giri that the greater proportion of our industrial labour is still drawn from rural areas, and as such, need extensive "conditioning", before they can even live in industrial centres, not to mention the acquiring of the necessary skill to work high powered machines.

All this, however, does not detract from the usefulness of Mr. Giri's book, and students of labour welfare in the country will appreciate this helpful work.

MANUAL OF HEALTH, BETTER USE OF LAND, ROAD TO WELFARE STATE, PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES OF MINOR IRRIGATION IN INDIA, A PEOPLE'S PROGRAMME. Published by the Ministry of Community Development.

The comprehensive programme of the Community Development Project takes in almost every aspect of human life in our rural areas. In keeping with this objective the Ministry of Community Development, from time to time, publishes a large amount of literature to inform the public of its aims and purpose. All these booklets serve this end. The Manual of Health written for the Village Level Worker,

deals with the common and urgent health problems in the country. The Road to Welfare State traces the development of the Community Development Projects. While it is true that the major irrigation projects of the country will bring vast tracts of land under cultivation, the smaller irrigation works will not lose their importance for many years to come in India. Hence the usefulness of this booklet on the principles and practices of minor irrigation in the country should be of much benefit to the small cultivator. A People's Programme gives many helpful cartoons for the better understanding of the aims and objects of the Community Development Projects.

C. C. C.

THE MISSION OF THE LAYMAN, by B. A. Santamaria, published by the Australian Catholic Publications, Box 373 F, G. P. O., Melbourne, 17 pp. price 6d.

This brief pamphlet is an analysis of Pius XII's two addresses to the World Lay Apostolate Congresses by the wellknown Australian editor of News-Weekly, who has become quite a controversial figure in the trade union movement in Australia. Mr. Santamaria who sacrificed a brilliant career to devote himself to the lay apostolate, has made a thorough study of the two addresses and he briefly recapitulates the essential doctrines they contain and the principles they enunciate. He is glad to note that "the Church does not intend yielding ground to her declared enemy, atheistic Communism, without putting up a fight. This battle will be fought to the end.... There is no doubt in the Pope's mind that every Catholic cannot but oppose Communism. On the other hand, it is a fact that in the free countries of the world there are many brands of leftist ideology which are often lumped together as Communism. The same phenomenon occurs in the trade union movement

where many so-called Communist leaders are by no means convinced Communists but often have leanings towards a leftist solution in their sincere gropings for a fair deal. Where should one draw the line when such men are concerned? It seems safer, however, to prevent them from harming the cause by building up in time an anti-Communist elite. This, however, is a debatable point. The issue is not so clear-cut, nor has the Pope treated of it explicitly.

Another important aspect of the two addresses that is emphasised by the author is the important duty of the laity to consecrate the world to Christ. This implies an accurate knowledge of the social, political and economic situation and positive action to infuse our social life with Christian principles. More Catholics must enter the field of politics and strive by legislation to bring about a socially just order in so far as the community can achieve this objective. It is evident that the author in writing his pamphlet wishes to focus the attention of his lay readers on the obligations for social action arising from their status within the Church. The more theoretical aspects of the addresses are very briefly summarised.

The whole subject of the lay apostolate is still in the first stages of its development. Much will depend on the likely future relations between the Church and the State. Still more the activity of the lay apostles, their triumphs and failures, their understanding of their true mission, their relations with the hierarchy, their personal worth and their apostolic zeal — all these elements will gradually but inevitably determine the shape and form that a mature lay apostolate is likely to take. At present there does appear to be some confusion or at least a lack of clear-sightedness on the many minor problems that have grown up in the wake of the major movement of the lay apostolate. But Mr. Santamaria has done his readers a great service in elu-

cidating the essential elements of the papal addresses and placing them in the forefront. His pamphlet should be carefully studied and discussed by lay leaders who are conscious of their responsibilities as lay apostles.

A. F.

THE ALL-KERALA CATHOLIC SOCIAL CONFERENCE, edited by O. J. Anthony, and published by the Kerala Regional Conference for Catholic Social Work, Ernakulam. 80 pp. price Rs. 1-50 plus postage.

Here is a beautifully got-up eighty page report of the Conference of social workers held under the auspices of the Regional Committee for Catholic Social Work in Kerala. Some hundred and fifty representatives of the various dioceses of Kerala met at Alwaye in April, 1957 and for three days discussed, under expert guidance, the various problems of the social apostolate. The speeches of the experts are reported in detail. As the topics discussed, such as the Parish Social Welfare and Housing Schemes, Cottage Industries, and Co-operatives in Parishes, Labour Organisations in the Parishes and the necessity for training Social Workers, are of interest everywhere in India, this report will prove useful to social workers outside Kerala as well.

It is a great pity that the reports of the diocesan social work are not included in this volume. An account of the actual work done in the parishes would have been even more interesting and useful. If the Conference, instead of the speech and discussion method, had adopted the workshop system of questionnaire and open discussion, the social workers might have gone back with definite plans of work in their various localities. However ideas are as important as activity; indeed activity is the fruit of thought. In this sense the Report is bound to serve as a source of inspiration to the many social workers active in Kerala today.

A. E.

Social Survey

Shellac

In spite of synthetic substitutes the shellac industry in India is still doing tolerably well. In 1954-55 lac and lac products accounted for 1.3 to 2.3 per cent of the total value of exports and earned on an average foreign exchange worth Rs. 110 millions. In May 1957 the industry provided employment to about 12,000 workers.

Though most of the shellac factories are situated in Chota Nagpur and West Bengal there are a few in Eastern Uttar Pradesh and in Bombay. According to the Lac Research Institute, Ranchi, there were 297 factories employing 10,884 workers in May 1956. The majority of factories are located in semi-urban areas and usually are very small both as regards number of workers employed and production. The working of the factories is seasonal depending on the availability of stick lac. There are four seasons for lac but the greater part of lac comes in during April - July (65.1 per cent), and October - November (26.7 per cent). In 1956-57 the total production amounted to 12.48 lakh maunds. A few big factories using power and a bigger complement of workers function throughout the year.

Nearly one third of the total number of workers employed in the industry are women.

Working conditions are on the whole primitive. Leave with or without pay is almost non-existent. There is little in the way of welfare agencies and social security. The workers earn from Rs. 1.50 to 3.50 a day.

There is very little, if any, trade union organisation among the workers. One of the reasons for this is the fact that the shellac industry exists in less developed areas and that it is very much dispersed.

Maternity Benefit

Legislation providing for the payment of cash maternity benefits, grant of leave and provision for other facilities to give maternity relief to women workers employed in factories exists today in

all States. Besides the Central Government have passed the Mines Maternity Benefit Act, which provides for similar benefits for women employed in mines. Similar benefits have also been extended to women workers in the plantations of Assam, West Bengal and Kerala under the State Acts. The scope, qualifying conditions, the period and rate of maternity benefits are not uniform under the various State Acts.

In 1956 out of the 488,049 women employed in factories, mines and plantations 55,291 claimed maternity benefits of whom 52,802 were granted benefits claimed. Rs. 3,737,671 were paid in cash.

Miners

In the colliery areas of Bihar and West Bengal a number of hospitals have been established for the care of the miners. Not only miners but also their dependents are treated in these institutions. Those workers, whose emoluments do not exceed Rs. 300 a month, get free indoor treatment. Out-door treatment is free for all. Those who suffer from T. B. get treatment at the several T. B. Clinics run by the Coal Mines Labour Welfare Fund. In all cases workers includes also their dependents.

The Welfare Board also has recreation rooms, libraries and other facilities attached to the hospitals. The latest amenity provided in all hospitals, in keeping with our general madness, is free Family Planning Clinics where advice and material is supplied free of cost. One hundred and forty-one women were supplied contraceptives free of charge up to 30th September, 1957. High pressured propaganda also is carried on in the colliery areas by the Mines Board of Health.

Accidents

Almost as many miners lost their lives in the two accidents in February this year as in all the accidents during 1957. Out of 630,000 workers employed in the mines in 1957, 254 persons were killed due to accidents. In the two latest accidents about 225 persons died. The fatality rate due to accidents in mines in the country during 1957 was the lowest ever recorded. In 1956 the number of persons killed was 335. The fatality rate per thousand workers in 1957 worked out at 0.40, which was 25 per cent less than the 1956 figure of 0.53. The average figure for the previous five years was 0.67.

The reduction in fatality in coal mines was even greater. Out of 350,000 workers employed in coal mines in 1957, 179 persons were killed as compared to 259 in 1956. The annual average for the previous five years was 316.

During 1957 the number of persons injured in mine accidents was 3,515 as against 4,281 in 1956 and an average of 4,266 during the previous five years. The fatality plus injury rate declined from 7.33 in 1956 to 5.90 in 1957, recording a fall of 20 per cent. In the case of coal mines the reduction was 12 per cent from 8.33 in 1956 to 7.01 in 1957.

Railway accidents, however, are on the increase and are becoming a weekly programme. Now that late running of trains has ceased to be news the railways are providing news of accidents. The Railway budget for 1958-59 has shown a surplus of nearly Rs. 28 crores. But if the rate of accidents is kept up the surplus is likely to vanish before the year is half spent.

Enquiries

Enquiries have become the fashion of the day. An enquiry is demanded for anything and everything. A Delhi student committed suicide and the members of the Opposition in the Parliament wanted an immediate enquiry, a train jumped the rails and an enquiry is demanded, a bus rolls down the embankment an enquiry must be held, a group of hooligans take the law into their own hands and cause mischief an enquiry is called for. It looks as if without enquiries nothing at all can be done. No one quarrels against the appointment of a commission of enquiry in certain cases but to demand an enquiry for every little accident, incident, and affair shows a lack of balance. We wonder whether any country in the world has as many enquiries going on in a year as we have in our country.

Small Industries

Seven hundred and seventy machines of different types and valued at Rs. 6,300,000 have so far been supplied to small industries under the scheme for supply of machinery on hire purchase basis for development of small industries.

The scheme is being implemented by the National Small Industries Corporation under the Ministry of Commerce and

Industry. It aims at quicker development of small-scale industries by providing equipment which small industrialists cannot afford to purchase against cash payment. Machinery is supplied against a small initial payment, the balance being payable in easy instalments.

Of the machines so far supplied, 235 have gone to small units, in the northern region, 189 to the western, 175 to the eastern and 171 to the southern region.

With the establishment of big industrial concerns smaller units manufacturing minor components and parts are cropping up like mushrooms everywhere. Besides giving a chance to business men who cannot afford large investments these small industries are helping in their own little way the solution of the vexed problem of unemployment which shows no signs of improvement.

Cigarettes

Cigarette production in India continued to maintain an upward trend. The estimated output of cigarettes in 1957 was 27,000 million compared to 26,000 million in 1956. In 1953 the production was only 18,000 million cigarettes. There are 17 units manufacturing cigarettes. Cancer or no cancer the consumption of cigarettes is increasing at a very rapid rate. As our educated women too are going in for the fashion the industry has a bright future! The smokers say that if they stop smoking they would put on weight which in turn would dispose them to heart-attacks. They prefer cancer.

Elections

The re-introduction of marking the ballot papers and putting them into a common ballot-box in the presence of the Election Officer has proved a great success in several bye-elections. It is likely that in the next general election this method will be followed everywhere.

Besides cutting down on the number of ballot boxes, the storage of these boxes is causing an acute headache to the authorities, the system will eliminate a number of malpractices. It is said that voters instead of depositing the papers in the ballot-boxes secrete them out of the booth and sell them to an election agent who later on deposits them in the box of his candidate. This will not be possible in the new system.

In the bye-elections in which this method was tried out, it was also found that the number of invalid votes was very low.

Harijans

Several resolutions, which, if carried out are likely to benefit the Harijans considerably, were passed by the State Ministers' Conference on Backward Classes held in Delhi during the second week of February. Some of the main resolutions are :

1. Separate colonies and hostels for Harijans should go and the word "Harijan" now tagged on to them should be dropped. To give them a mixed character, the existing places exclusively for Harijans should take in at least 10 per cent non-Harijans who should be given the same facilities as are offered to members of Scheduled Castes.

2. In general hostels controlled or assisted by Government, 10 per cent of seats should be reserved for Harijans.

3. Government should not give any assistance to Housing Co-operatives unless they draw 10 per cent of members from among Harijans.

4. The State Governments should endeavour to provide building sites to Harijans. Wherever there was land lying waste, efforts should be made to settle the landless people, giving preference to Harijans.

5. Efforts should be made to set up some sort of machinery which would provide free legal assistance to Harijans.

A suggestion was also made to help those in debt. It was suggested that debts of over three years' duration should be simply written off and others should be payed up after allowing interest at the minimum rate which was not to exceed six per cent.

Pandit Pant addressing the Conference said that the States were not using the funds allotted to them for the welfare of backward classes. During the First Plan period Rs. 39 crores was made available but not all of it was spent. During the Second Plan Rs. 91 crores is ear-marked for the purpose. The Home Minister exhorted the State Ministers to see to that this sum was

spent and spent well to raise the standard of living of these unfortunate people.

Student Rowdyism

There was a very interesting discussion in the Lok Sabha on a private members resolution demanding a high powered Commission to enquire into student indiscipline and rowdyism. According to the mover of the resolution the cause of the trouble was mainly a sense of frustration brought about by unsatisfactory economic conditions at home, lack of employment opportunities after completion of studies, unsatisfactory relationship between students and their teachers and increasing interference from political parties. Another speaker urged the government to provide adequate hostel accommodation, introduce compulsory tutorial system and limit the number of students in colleges. Several emphasised the economic factor as the cause of frustration. Only one speaker, Mr. D. C. Sharma, was of the opinion that the root cause of the malady was the lack of a powerful ideal. As poverty and its concomitants have been with us for a very long time the economic factor alone cannot explain this postwar phenomenon of widespread indiscipline and rowdyism among students, especially in certain States. Our modern education is more and more completely divorced from all religious influence which is a disastrous step. It has been the experience of mankind everywhere and at all times that when higher ideals are removed man tends to become a glorified animal giving free vent to his animal instincts. Unless we emphasise that man is not just an animal alone but is endowed with a rational soul which has an eternal destiny no amount of commissions, laws and exhortations will do the least good.

Dowry

A Bill for the prohibition of giving and taking dowry in Kerala has been introduced in the Kerala Assembly. The measure applies to all persons domiciled in the State, whether the marriage is performed inside or outside the State, and to all marriages performed in the State even if neither of the parties is domiciled in the State.

Presents at the time of the marriage, however, are permitted provided they do not exceed the maximum of Rs. 2,000.

Under the Bill those giving and taking, or abetting the giving and taking of dowry, will be liable for punishment with simple

imprisonment not exceeding six months or with fine not exceeding Rs. 1,000 or with both.

The dowry system is one of the causes of much misery to the poor of Kerala. This measure is likely, therefore, to receive widespread support from all sections of the public.

Air Trips

In days gone by the slogan was "Join the navy and see the world". But it was reserved strictly for men. Now our women too will have a chance to see the world not by sailing the seven seas but flying over them. The British Airways have decided to recruit Indian girls to work as hostesses in their planes flying on the Far Eastern route. Thirty of them will be soon be travelling between Beirut and Singapore via Calcutta neatly wrapped up in dark blue saris with gold edgings.

Indian girls have been working for long in all Indian planes, internal as well as external services.

A Name

Soon after Independence there was a widespread craze for the changing of names of towns. Trichinopoly, a melodious mouthful was changed to a jaw-breaking Tiruchirapalli, Ramnad became Ramanathapuram and so on. Now they are talking of going back to the discarded names. Thus it is reported that the City Fathers of Kozikode have decided to rename their fair city, Calicut. It is a bit difficult though to understand why, after eight years of unperturbed sleep, the Railway Board has suddenly decided to change the name of Bezwada station to Vijayawada. What if one of these fine days the City Fathers of Vijayawada solemnly resolve to go back to the old name of the city, Bezwada?

Gifts

Up to now our right hand could give a gift to a friend without the left hand knowing what it was. It won't be so once the latest Gift Tax comes into force. Government would like to know the value of the gift so that the giver may be forced to give something to the general coffers too. At the rate we are progressing, soon every private citizen will have to engage an accountant to keep accounts for him to satisfy the authorities of the income tax, wealth tax, expenditure tax, gift tax and who knows what other tax.

Lotteries

Bad news is on its way to organisers of lotteries. The Minister for Communications has brought in a Bill to amend the Indian Post Office Act, 1898 which if approved will make it illegal to send by post "any ticket proposal or advertisement relating to a lottery; or any other matter descriptive of, or otherwise relating to, a lottery, which is calculated to act as an inducement to persons to participate in that lottery.

The change in the law does not affect lotteries organised or authorised by Government.

Hitherto articles containing lottery tickets or proposals relating to lotteries, if detected during the course of their transmission by post, had to be returned to the sender. Henceforward such material will be destroyed by the postal authorities.

Automobiles

The number of automobiles produced in India from January to August, 1957 amounted to 21,684 compared to 32,138 in the whole of 1956 and 23,084 in 1955. During the month of July, 2,811 were manufactured as against 2,273 in August, a slight decline.

It is proposed to set up another plant to manufacture trucks. It will be located in West Bengal.

Cheques

For the first time in the history of India rupee travellers' cheques are available from January 2nd, 1958, thus meeting a long felt need to make not only for carefree travel in this country and abroad but also to reduce the loss often suffered on the release of unexpended foreign currency in India.

These cheques, in denominations of Rs. 50 and Rs. 100 are readily spendable and refundable on demand and "represent money that is good anywhere, any time and almost indefinitely."

It is stated that there are no irksome formalities attached to it, being cashable in out of the way places and outside banking hours. These are cashable not only in the various offices and sub-offices of the State Bank of India, of which there are nearly 600 in the country, but also from a large number of designated agencies here and all over the world.

The identification problem has been obviated by the use of two signatures on the cheque itself. The first signature is made at the time of the purchase and the second while encashing the same.

It is be hoped that cheques of smaller denominations will be made available in the future.

Foreign Aid

According to an official publication of the Union Finance Ministry India received foreign aid amounting to Rs. 7,830 millions upto July 1957 towards her development programmes.

Of this amount Rs. 5,810 millions were loans and Rs. 2,020 millions grants. Out of the total authorisation, Rs. 2,127.4 million were utilised up to the end of March 1956, and the balance of Rs. 5,700.2 millions is available for the Second Plan.

The total assistance from U.S. amounted to Rs. 4,000 millions. Since July, 1957 more money has been made available by U.S.

The Soviet Union has given loans of Rs. 1,230 millions and a grant of Rs. 7.5 millions. Of the loan amount, Rs. 630 millions is the value of the machinery for the Bhilai steel plant, and another credit of Rs. 600 millions will be made available from 1959 to finance the following schemes: heavy machine building works; mining machinery plant; power station at Neivelli; optical glass factory and the development of the Korba coal fields.

The assistance received from other countries was as follows: Australia Rs. 111.2 millions, Canada 409.1 millions, New Zealand 27.3 millions, Norway 16.6 millions, U.K. 203.9 millions, West Germany 5 millions. Besides these the Ford Foundation has given Rs. 71.1 millions, the International Bank 775.7 millions for the public sector and 766.9 millions for the private sector, British Bank credits for Air India International 53.3 millions.

At the time of writing negotiations are going on for more aid from various countries. It is reported that the Czech Government is willing to make available credit and technical help to set up the 30-crore foundry-forge project at Ranchi. The U.S. is expected to help generously through loans and grants.

Telegrams

The Railways will soon make it possible for passengers travelling in certain mail and express trains to receive urgent business or personal telegrams. In the beginning the facility will be restricted to persons travelling in air-conditioned and first class compartments.

F. C. Rodrigues

